

SPECIAL EVENTS

*The Faculty of Music,
University of Toronto*

*Concert Hall,
Edward Johnson Building*

NELLI SHKOLNIKOVA, *Violinist*

LJWBA EDLINA, *Pianist*

Thursday, March 17th, 1966

8:30 p.m.

Programme

SONATA IN E MINOR, FOR VIOLIN AND CONTINUO (BWV 1023) *J. S. Bach*

Allegro

Adagio ma non tanto

Allemanda: Allegro moderato

Gigue: Vivace assai

This sonata, possibly Bach's earliest solo composition for the violin (an instrument, by the way, which he himself played professionally), was composed at Cöthen around 1720. It has been regarded as a sort of study for the great set of six accompanied sonatas he wrote shortly afterwards. Its four-movement layout does not follow exactly that of the Italian convention represented by the solo sonatas of Corelli, as might have been anticipated. Rather, it suggests a merging of that convention with two others — the organ toccata and the dance-suite. The opening movement, an impromptu-like sequence by the soloist over a single long-sustained bass note in the accompaniment, has a parallel in the openings of many organ toccatas, by Bach and others. (That bass note is, of course, the foot-held pedal note of the organ.) This leads directly into a solemn slow movement. Then follow two dances, whose genres (*allemande* and *gigue*) are standard ones in the baroque dance-suite, and whose patterns also assume the symmetrical or "bipartite" form usual in such a suite.

SONATA OP. 30 No. 2 IN C MINOR FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO *Beethoven*

Allegro con brio

Adagio cantabile

Scherzo: Allegro

Finale: Allegro

This Sonata, seventh in the series of ten by Beethoven for this medium, represents the largest framework he had attempted in his compositions for violin and keyboard up to the time of its writing. He was 32, and just beginning to unlock the tremendous forces of creative drive which were to lead shortly to the great achievements of the *Eroica*, the Violin Concerto, the *Rasumovsky* Quartets.

At first acquaintance there is little sense of medium: and C minor is not even a particularly effective key for violin music. Possibly the first violin sonata in history to be conceived in four symphonic-scale movements, the work is in some places quite rough-hewn, at first suggesting the composer is making a magnificent "stab at" his task, without actually bringing it off. The impression

is offset by such moments as the little "dying fall" of triplet thirds in the two instruments, which occurs at a cadence-point in the slow movement, and which could hardly be put as sensitively in any other instrumentation.

Effective or not ("what do I care for your wretched fiddle when inspiration is on me?" Beethoven growled at a complaining player once), C minor is for Beethoven a key of grim drama. The present finale is in fact an exception among his compositions in this key, in that it both begins and ends in the minor. His usual habit is to turn to the major on a note of optimism or sober triumph; but here he not only remains in the minor but emphasizes its anger and grimness by accelerating the tempo towards the end — an effect he employed again in the Sonata Appassionata for piano some years later.

The opening movement of the C minor Sonata is remarkable for its initial gesture, a little motivic idea which reappears in all sorts of guises. As so often with Beethoven, there are really two development sections, one in the middle and one at the end — and in this case they are even fairly closely related. The Adagio is a songful piece, expansive in its phrases and wonderful rhetorical coda; the main theme seems to have travelled some distance when we hear it for the second time. A scherzo in C major is a brief dazzling ray of light, with its humorous imitative trio-section. The finale is a decidedly large-scale rondo, of astonishing inventiveness. Its middle part is an extensive fugato passage. — J.B.

— INTERMISSION —

SONATA IN E MINOR FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

M. Kuss

Margarita Kuss was born in Russia in 1921. In 1948 she graduated from the Composition Department of the Moscow Conservatoire where she studied under the guidance of Prof. V. Shebalin. Soon afterwards she was received into the Union of Soviet Composers.

The Sonata for Violin and Piano in E minor was written in 1963. It has 3 movements, the second and the third ones are played without intermission. The first movement — Moderato — is in a form of sonata allegro. The principal and secondary themes are similar in a way. (Concentration, anticipation). The Second Movement — Allegro molto — is of Scherzo character. In the Scherzo there are some intonations of Russian town folklore. In the last bars of the second movement the theme of the Finale goes over to the piano. The Finale is a natural development of the second movement. The monotonous, contemplative music of the Finale leads to the culmination based on the principal theme of the Finale. Then follows the Coda based on the theme taken from the first movement.

REMINDER — LAST CONCERT IN THE SPECIAL EVENTS SERIES
THURSDAY, MARCH 31st, 1966 — ANTON KUERTI, Pianist